REMARKS

The specification has been amended to correct grammatical errors. No new matter has been added.

Claims 1-12 remain in the application. Claims 6-12 have been amended.

Claims 6-10 have been amended to address antecedent basis issues, and have been amended according to the Examiner's suggestion to include the word "energy" originally set forth in claim 1.

Claim 11 has been amended to address the rejection lodged under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, and now no longer recites "the awareness information". Claim 11 pertains to the mixed methodology described on page 25 at lines 12-18.

Claim 12 has been amended to overcome the objection and now includes a period at the end of the claim.

Claims 1-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, and were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. Both rejections are focused on distance adjustments being made "according to a level of privacy". The Examiner suggests that the applicant may have been referring to the "distance" that an agent wants to provide other agents. This is not correct, and both rejections are traversed.

Figure 7 shows the process for obtaining an ideal distance for preparing on-line activities. The matrices employed (S,G,O,T) are discussed on pages 9 and 10 of the application, and Figures 8-11 illustrate use of the matrices in determining the various ideal distances. It should be understood that this process is only part of what is being solved by the present invention.

As stated on page 4 of the application, "The awareness monitoring system includes (1) input sensors for receiving real-time data produced by the event and (2) an elastic spring model for automatically adjusting a distance that is according to a level of privacy desired by the individual user and a need of the collaborative project to have some shared information about individual user activities." (Emphasis added). With reference to pages 24 and 25, it can be seen that what the invention provides is a system that is adaptive to events and tasks. In operation,

there are a number of adaptive media walls, which are virtual in nature, that keep the organization functioning and provide adaptive awareness to all the members of the team.

Thus, the system considers a number of "spring constants". As discussed on page 12, lines 22 et seq., there are spring constants for what one agent wants to provide to other agents, K_S; spring constants that the organization wants, K_G; spring constants that the other agents want, K_O; and spring constants for a given task, K_T. These spring constants are used to balance the level of privacy desired by a given user against the need of the collaborative project to have some shared information about individual user's activities. Flow diagrams 12-16 describe these spring constants. Furthermore, the "preferences" are determined using weighted matrices, W_S, W_G, W_O, and W_T. These are discussed in detail on pages 16 and 17 of the application, and their application is presented in Figures 17-21 of the application. Finally, the system optimally uses a set of back to ideal energy difference vectors, as is discussed on pages 20 et seq.

In view of the above, the claim language accurately describes what the invention is and what has been taught and specifically enabled by the patent specification.

Claims 1, 5, 6, and 8 have been rejected as being obvious over U.S. Patent 6,453,336 to Beyda in view of U.S. Patent 6,697,341 to Roy in further view of Donath ("Visual Who: Animating the affinities of an electronic community"); claims 2-4 have been rejected as being obvious over the Beyda/Roy/Donath combination further in view of Hattori ("Socialware: Multiagent Systems for Supporting Network Communities"). These rejections are traversed.

Initially, since no rejections based on prior art have been lodged against claims 7 and 9-12, it is assumed that these claims are drawn to patentable subject matter assuming the rejections lodged under 35 U.S.C. 112, first and second paragraph, and the object to claim 12 are overcome. Confirmation of the same in the next action would be appreciated.

With respect to the references, it is noted at the outset none of the references are specifically related to a collaborative environment where an elastic spring energy model is employed. Further, none of the references show balancing

privacy desired by individual users against the needs of the collaborative project using an elastic spring energy model. Thus, no combination of the references of record would make obvious any of the claims in the application.

Beyda describes a video conferencing system where the client can control the allocation of resources between audio and video (or data). This might allow, for example, the use to "prefer video over audio such that when resources are limited audio quality is sacrificed to preserve video quality" (see column 3, lines 60-65). Thus, Beyda does not show adjusting a distance according to a need of a collaborative project to have some shared information about individual user activities, as the Examiner has alleged. Rather, all that Beyda is doing is allowing the user to make adjustments depending on the availability of resources. This is not the same as or remotely related to a system which makes adjustments based on a collaborative project being performed where there needs to be some degree of privacy maintained. All that column 8, lines 23-42 describes is making these adjustments automatically even if the user is not available or interested in making adjustments. Further, all that columns 10 and 11 relate to are making changes to the mixture of audio and visual materials.

In view of this, Beyda completely lacks the features recited in claim 1.

The Examiner also admits that Beyda lacks the use of an elastic spring energy model. The undersigned concurs.

Roy, like Beyda, completely lacks the features recited in claim 1. Contrary to the position taken by the Examiner, Roy does not show adjusting the paramaters according to a level of privacy desired by the individual users. Rather, Roy, like Beyda, is related to videoconferencing. Roy teaches delivering a different representation of the same video signals to each of a plurality of users depending on the hardware, limitations, software limitations, network limitations and user preferences of each user device. That is, each user chooses the quality of service he or she wants to receive in view of system limitations and cost considerations, not in view of a user's preference for privacy balanced against the needs of the collaborative project as in the claimed invention. The passage at column 5, lines 55 to column 6, line 7 is not on point since these paragraphs deal with an operator either selectively choosing performance parameters or having these chosen by

default settings.

Like Beyda, Roy does not employ an elastic spring energy model.

Donath has been relied upon as teaching an elastic spring energy model. Donath uses a spring based model to visualize the social patterns of an electronic community (i.e., types of usage patterns (times of use; subjects of interest, etc.)). Donath does not use an elastic spring model in the context of automatically determining awareness settings among people in a distributed working environment as is contemplated by this invention. Donath does not adjust distance according to a level of privacy desired by individual users and a need of a collaborative project. In fact, Donath does not adjust anything. Rather, Donath provides a method for visualizing interactions using a spring based model. Finally, Donath could not reasonably be combined with either Beyda or Roy, because visualization of affiliations amongst people has nothing to do with videoconferencing, and there is no suggestion in any of the references that the spring model might enhance video conferencing.

In view of the above, no combination of Beyda, Roy, and Donath would make the claimed invention obvious since none of the references contemplate or suggest an application as contemplated by this invention, and none of the references show or suggest the process step of automatically adjusting, as is recited in claim 1.

Hattori does not make up for any of the deficiencies of Beyda, Roy and Donath (i.e., it does not show or suggest use of spring model for making automatic adjustments which consider a level of privacy desired by individual users and a need of the collaborative project). Page 3 only discusses making temporary adjustments to the weightings of the viewpoints using slidebars (not an automated step that utilizes an electronic spring energy model) . Therefore, claims 2-4 cannot be deemed to be obvious.

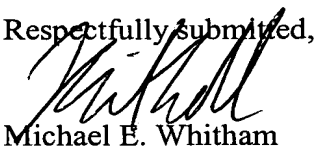
In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully requested that the application be reconsidered, that claims 1-12 be allowed, and that the application be passed to issue.

Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local

telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

A provisional petition is hereby made for any extension of time necessary for the continued pendency during the life of this application. Please charge any fees for such provisional petition and any deficiencies in fees and credit any overpayment of fees to Applicants' Deposit Account No. 50-0510 (IBM Yorktown).

Respectfully submitted,



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